fixed a time schedule for acquisition and handing over of land for the new site to RAPL. As regards the Gas supply Agreement, RAPL and OIL India Ltd. (OIL) have resolved all the outstanding issues *viz.* clauses relating to liquidated damages, technical issues such as composition of gas, flow rates etc. RAPL and OIL have initiated the draft Gas Supply Contract on July 6, 2000. They have further agreed to execute the final Gas Supply Agreement at the earliest, subject to the approval of their respective Board of Directors and acceptance by financial institutions from RAPL side.

The Project is expected to be commissioned within 44 months from the date of signing of Gas Supply Agreement and handing over of land, whichever is later.

Manufacture of non-Chemical fertilizers

†636. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH:
DR. D. MASTHAN:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether k is a fact that Khadi and Village Industries Commission is considering the scheme for manufacturing non-chemical fertilizers;

(b) if so whether the possibilities of encouraging the use of non-chemical fertilizers in the country have been identified; and

(c) if so, the assessment of Government in this regard and the average ratio of the use of chemical and non-chemical fertilizers in the country at present?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) to (c) Government of India is encouraging the use of bio-fertilizers and compost-farm yard manure in the country as a method of supplementing the use of chemical fertilizers with a view *to* increasing the crop production and maintenance of soil fertility. Khadi and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Village Industries Commission is also working as one of the agencies for promoting production and utilisatio'n of bio-gas plants slurry as bio-manure and for conversion of bio-waste into compost and vermiculture. While the use of chemical fertilizers in the country in terms of nutrients N, P & K is presently estimated at 90 Kg. per hectare, use of non-chemical fertilizers, however, is a localised source of supplementary nutrient supply to the corps. As per existing estimates, about 133.8 million tonnes of rural compost and 5.25 million tonnes of urban compost are being used as manure compost. In addition, about 10,000 tonnes per annum of bio-fertilizers are also being used as supplementary nutrients to the chemical fertilizers.

Mega fertilizer plant in Oman

637. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that enormous delay in decision-making by Indian promoters put off the Joint Venture Project with Omanese Government for setting up a mega Fertilizer Plant in Oman;

(b) if so, Government's stand on the latest development of the ill-fated project; and

(c) how the anticipated shortage of Urea is proposed to be tackled?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) and (b) It had not been possible to take an early decision with regard to Indo-Oman Fertilizer Project on account of the need to restructure the Project in the wake of the fall in international urea prices and the consequent still conditions imposed by the foreign lenders which were not acceptable to the Indian Sponsors of the Project. However, the revised and restructured Indo-Oman Fertilizer Project has since been approved by the Government on 20-6-2000 subject to early resolution of certain outstanding issues.

(c) No shortage of urea is anticipated.